Aircrafts taken on wet lease by Indian Airlines

496. SHRI M. A. BABY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that aircrafts were taken on wet lease by the Indian Airlines recently only on the directions of the Aviation Ministry officials;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what are the details of the said deal ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Quality Control norms for IA

497. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news item captioned 'IA ignoring quality control norms' as reported in The Times of India dated 25th June, 1993;

(b) if so, the details thereof ; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to bring stringent check on quality control norms in Indian Airlines ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The news item has quoted an office note of 5th November, 1992, submitted by four Indian Airlines engineers in charge of quality control. The note deals with the system of approvals to engineers/approved Inspectors. The note does not deal with violation of air safety norms by Indian Airlines.

(c) The norms/procedures for quality control have been defined in the Inspection Manual of Indian Airlines, duly approved by DGCA. The total maintenance activities of Indian Airlines including Quality Control Department is under close surveillance of DGCA. Discrepancies observed are taken up for corrective action by Indian Airlines. Two safety Audit Teams have also been constituted by DGCA, at Delhi and Bombay, which carry out frequent checks at various bases of Indian Airlines and point out any breach of safety norms. The requisite corrective action is taken promptly.

Functioning of Air Taxis

498. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government proposes to regulate the functioning of air taxis in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the private air taxi operators are not allowed to publish their flying schedules;

(d) if so, the reasons for discrimination with private airlines operating in the country; and

(e) by when they would be permitted to publish their schedules in accordance with the open sky policy ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) and (b) Air Taxi Operations are governed by the guidelines issued under AIC 24 of 1990 and other instructions issued by the DGCA from time to time.

(c) and (d) Since the Air Taxi operations are non-scheduled/charter basis, the operators are not allowed to publish flight schedules.

(e) After the proposed repeal of the Air Corporations Act, 1953, there will be no bar on publication of schedules by air taxi operators.

Shortage of pilots on Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Ladakh routes of Indian Airlines

499. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that tourists visiting the Andaman and Nicobar islands and Ladakh had a harrowing experience on being marooned in these places due to acute shortage of Pilots for these routes served by the Indian Airlines as per the news item titled "Tourists to Andaman & Nicobar, Ladakh a harassed lot" which appeared in the Hindustan Times, dated 3-6-93;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what remedial steps Government have taken in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) and (b) In May 1993 two flights of Calcutta-Port Blair-Calcutta route were